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Batman Confidential

Readers may think they know all about Superman and Batman's formative years, but there's still a lot more to be revealed—and those revelations are on the way, courtesy of a pair of ongoing titles that will focus on hitherto unexplored experiences in the early careers of DC's iconic heroes.

Superman Confidential and *Batman Confidential* are ongoing series that enlist the aid of high-profile creative teams to spotlight key moments of the heroes' earliest days as heroes—first meetings, critical decisions, the forging of alliances, and the foundations of friendships.

Superman Confidential, the first *Confidential* title out of the gate, kicks off with a story arc by DC—*The New Frontier* creator Darwyn Cooke, who is joined by *Batman: The Long Halloween* and *Superman for All Seasons* artist Tim Sale.

Sale explained how he became involved with the project. "I was approached by Dan DiDio. Jeph [Loeb] had recently signed with Marvel, and I had still obligations under my exclusive contract with DC that needed honoring, and Dan had come up with the idea of the *Superman* and *Batman Confidential* titles. He knew of my admiration for Darwyn's work, and that I had expressed to [editor] Mark Chiarello that I would love to someday work with Darwyn, and once Dan said that Darwyn would be writing, I was in."

Their story arc will reveal details of Superman's first experience with that glowing souvenir from home, Kryptonite. "Darwyn had dug up the first kryptonite story from 1949 by Bill Finger & Al Plastino and we took that as our jumping off point," Sale explained. "Our version is very different in both style and plot, but there are structural things in the tale that are simi-



lar. Our story is set when Superman is young and just discovering the extent of his powers. It is also very early in his relationship with Lois."

While Sale has previously illustrated the Man of Steel's formative experiences in *Superman for All Seasons*, he's not trying to recreate the look of that series in his *Confidential* arc. "The art style I'm using is different, but the innocence that my Superman has is the same," the artist said. "There is more variety in his expressions perhaps, in this version than the one I drew in *For All Seasons*. I wanted very much to have a different look than *For All Seasons*, both because I want that look to be special for the stories I do with Jeph, and because I felt this story deserved its own look. I do think I have matured as an artist since then also, and there will be some difference from that, too."

Sale has enjoyed his collaboration with Cooke, and it shows in the finished tale. "We very much see Superman in the same way. The sense of what makes these people tick, and what's fun about them, is in large part what I liked about Darwyn's *New Frontier*."

That doesn't mean that the were in perfect sync on every aspect of the story, however. "Darwyn is fond of some of the more cartoony aspects of the villains in Superman's gallery, and I'm not so much, and so getting my swerve on when it came to them was challeng-

made peace with his inner demons—there's still a lot of anger in him, which he channels into violence. He's not yet the calm forward-planner he will later become. He's still a little green, still a little rough around the edges, and he doesn't yet have the huge arsenal of high-tech gadgets. That said, he does pick up a few cool toys during the course of the story - not least the Bat-Plane, which is a prototype VTOL stealth fighter being developed by Wayne Aerospace.

"In short, WayneTech and LexCorp are each competing for a multi-billion dollar government defense contract. Needless to say, Lex Luthor has bigger plans than merely selling weapons. He plans to use them for himself - and in a big way. So when bodies start dropping in Gotham City, Batman takes a personal interest. And then the giant robots turn up..."

Neither *Superman Confidential* nor *Batman Confidential* takes place in contemporary continuity, since they focus on pivotal events in the heroes' careers—however, unlike the *All Star* titles, they don't take place isolated from continuity, either. "I would say the series offer an 'augmentation' of the regular continuity," Carlin explained. "For example, *Batman Confidential*'s stories are set in Batman's past and will fill in some gaps—though more often, they will update and reform what's always been there."

So what differentiates *Batman Confidential* from the long-running *Legends of the Dark Knight*? "Well, there are some similarities," Carlin said. "We can get different and/or busier talent to do shorter arcs rather than ask for the commitment an ongoing monthly entails. However, I would say that *Legends of the Dark Knight*'s focus wasn't specifically the 'important moments' in Batman's time-line, which is what we will

Confidential Information



ing—but there is so much in Darwyn's writing that I just couldn't wait to get to draw, that it was fun."

A month later, DC enlists the all-star team of Andy Diggle & Whilce Portacio to reveal the Dark Knight's secrets in *Batman Confidential*. As editor Mike Carlin explained, "The idea here is to do some 'famous firsts'—important moments in the Bat-family's lives and missions. The first arc shows the beginnings of Batman's arsenal of 'wonderful toys,' and Bruce Wayne's first run in with a fellow billionaire... from Metropolis."

A billionaire... Metropolis... can we assume that his initials are LL? And if so, does that mean that Superman will make an appearance as well? "Superman is *not* involved, but this is Lex Luthor & Bruce Wayne's first tangle. Again we were looking for that 'first' moment-- and this seemed important to both Bruce Wayne's story and Lex Luthor's."

Writer Andy Diggle explained why he's bringing Luthor into Batman's world—or vice versa. "I know Luthor's traditionally been Superman's arch-nemesis, but it intrigued me how similar he and Bruce Wayne actually are on the surface," Diggle explained. "They're both brilliant, driven, super-rich billionaire industrialists, each seeking to change the world for what they see as the betterment of mankind. So on the surface, there's not much to differentiate between them, and neither knows about the other's shadowy double life... yet. But once you scratch away the veneer, you see they have very different ideas as to what constitutes the public good - although both are using extreme, secretive measures to pursue their agendas. I think that leads to some interesting contrasts, interesting dramatic friction."

As Diggle sees it, the arc take place somewhere during Batman's second year in business. "He hasn't yet

be aiming for here." So does that mean that, even with *Confidential* joining the Bat-line, there's still a place for *LotDK*? "There's *always* room for Batman!" Carlin said.

Even though the first arc won't debut for more than a month, Carlin is already working ahead on future storylines. "We have arcs in the works with folks like Denys Cowan, Michael Green, Marc Guggenheim, Jerry Bingham, Kevin Maguire, and Rags Morales. I have been stockpiling stories and art for several arcs at once, so some are far ahead and others are just starting." Does that mean that the lateness that has plagued other recently-launched series will not hamper *Batman Confidential*? "We *always* hope that and strive to ship on time, and the stockpiling possibilities I have with various creative teams *should* avoid any problems in shipping."

Superman Confidential #1 is slated for early November release; *Batman Confidential* follows in early December; both books are priced at \$2.99.

by Cliff Biggers & Matt Brady

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

Geoff Johns Prime Suspect in Superboy's Return

With *Green Lantern* #13, Geoff Johns & Ivan Reis wrapped up "Revenge of the Green Lanterns," an arc which saw the (assumed) dead return to active duty, the Cyborg Superman come back to major threat-level status, Hal Jordan (and Guy Gardner) disobey the Guardians, the Manhunters be taken off the board (hopefully), the first appearance of Superboy Prime since he was jailed at the end of *Infinite Crisis*, and some enigmatic chanting of "52."

After delivering an ending that left readers with more questions than answers, Johns took the time to address some of those questions, beginning with the unexpected return of Superboy Prime. Do the Guardians see him as a potential danger? "Yeah - he's a huge danger, and the Guardians have a perspective on it that nobody else will have that will be revealed down the line," Johns said. "He's a massive, massive threat, and the key power player that's going to play into some stuff that's coming up as well. And of course, it ties into the whole of 52 and everything else. There are still a lot of major revelations for the DC Universe that are going to happen in *Green Lantern*, with the Guardians of the Universe already being aware of a lot of things that the readers aren't - and so are a few other characters, like Cyborg Superman who knows something."

"So yeah - Superboy Prime is going to play a role in some upcoming storylines. He's a dangerous, dangerous guy."

When Superboy Prime returns, not only is he not in costume, he's not in *any* costume. Is there a significance to his being unclothed? "Well - he was shirtless when we left him there, but more than that, it's a subtle thing - he's looking at his belt, and he's contemplating who and what he is. You've got to remember, with this appearance, he's been

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there for over a year. And you can see when they post Guy Gardner as one of the guards - they're still treating him as a high level threat. The guards aren't allowed to leave their post for a month."

"For us, him being naked was an acknowledgement of stripping himself down to being this kid again, and being completely absorbed in what he's done, and what he's going to do."

Is there any hope of redemption for the super-teen who nearly ended the DC Universe? "You saw his reaction when he did what he did in *Infinite Crisis*," Johns said, "but at that same time, he's walked over that line. Does he think he can walk back? Should he? Does this universe even matter to him anymore? Is it the fact that, now that he's got a big dent on his car, another one won't matter? If he's already on that path, is he going to continue on it, or is he going to really try and work and go back?"

"It's a tough thing, but of course, the parallel is Hal Jordan, which is why he works so well in that book. It's no mistake or coincidence why Superboy Prime is going to be dealt with in *Green Lantern* quite a bit."

"He has some echoes of Hal. Also, the Guardians of the Universe bring the cosmic element into it, and tie into the overall DCU mythology that we're going to be unveiling. He's a central figure to everything. Emotionally and thematically, he's going to give us a lot of story. He's not somebody that you want to completely throw away. And he's not going to be one-note either - he's not a psychotic, murdering character. He has his episodes, but he's much more complex than that."

Now what about that litany of "52" that the Guardians were reciting?... "Right. I think this is the first time we've mentioned '52' in a monthly book..." Johns said in semi-reply. But to what do they refer? An event? A number? A group of people? "That's the question, isn't it? What does that

number mean? That's something that we wanted to make sure we were doing when we were working both on *Crisis* and 52 - "52" is going to mean something. It's really there to set the stage to let people know that 52 isn't just a story about Booster Gold and Black Adam and these other characters - it's a DC Universe story."

Of course, there will be some revelations regarding Hal Jordan in upcoming issues of *Green Lantern* as well. "The next arc really goes into what Hal went through during the missing year, and the next four issues literally set up the next year and half of *Green Lantern* - and put a new villain on the board that I'm really excited about." So who is it? Johns won't say, although he does mention that "he's a minor villain that appeared, but he's just the perfect Hal Jordan villain." So he's been seen before? "Yes, briefly. Years ago. Trust me, for what we're doing, and what you've seen so far in *Green Lantern*, this villain makes perfect sense."

The upcoming "Wanted: Hal Jordan" arc will also explain why the Global Guardians after him. "It's Hal finding out why everyone is chasing him, as well as Hal dealing with his time as a POW and finding out what that was actually about. It also talks about his duty as a Green Lantern, comparing and contrasting it with the jobs that other super heroes do."

"There's a scene where he's being lectured by another hero about the Freedom of Power Treaty which prohibits foreign metahumans from operating in other countries, and telling him that he needs to respect the Treaty. As Hal's said before, he answers with, 'Borders are ridiculous. I'm Green Lantern and my duty is to the whole planet if I need to go somewhere, I'm going to go.'"

"And then, he adds: 'Do you realize that I've been to hundreds of planets - hundreds, and the only one with countries is earth?'"

"Whenever you see an alien planet in the DCU, it's completely homogenized. You never see borders or states. Even with *Hawkworld*, even though they had classes and zones, it was all one world. So we're playing with the idea that, in the universal view, earth is really this primitive, primitive planet."

Johns alluded to this "worldview" in an earlier tale that showed one of Hal's early trips back to Oa after coming back, and there were some alien GLs who were surprised that earthlings still existed, and could speak. "They don't know. And again, in their view, the people of earth - there have been, other than the heroes, what, five that have ever left their home planet, and they only went to the moon and hustled right back. They think that's hilarious. It's basically like a guy saying that he lives in Cincinnati and is somewhat worldly, because he went up in a hot air balloon once. Woo."

"But I think that's fun - it gives a fun element to *Green Lantern*, which the book needs to have. I think having Hal Jordan being the human underdog is a great idea to mix in with everything else in the Corps. We've always had this idea that the earth is

the great center of everything, and it's not. What makes it strong is its diversity."

Johns is aware that, if there's any concern that fans have regarding *Green Lantern*, it's the book's tardiness. Are steps underway to get the book on a more regular schedule? "We're going as fast as we can, and we've talked about getting fill in artists here and there, but... look, on *Titans*, we're having all these fill in artists come on, and they're okay, but I love Tony [Daniel] to be there, but when you look at Ivan Reis on *Green Lantern*, you just want him to draw the book. We're trying our best to get on track. Will we have a fill-in artist at some point? Maybe so we can get to twelve issues a year. Right now, we're at about nine a year. But the quality... I'm so proud of the first arc. If you flip through it, it's just beautiful. I think we're really on a roll, and I'd just hate to break that up."

"I know everybody's worried about schedule at DC, and we're seeing Grant [Morrison] & Andy [Kubert] having fill-ins on *Batman*, and *Wonder Woman* has gone bi-monthly, and it's weird - it's become commonplace for books to be delayed for quality."

"But we're working as fast as we can, and I know it's always a question of what do people want? Do they want a book every month, or do they want the best book the creators can do every month? We're trying to get everything on schedule, and the fact that Ivan's into #15 right now, and #14 is on track for the next couple of weeks... hopefully, we'll get things back on track."

Green Lantern #14 is tentatively scheduled for late October release.



Marz Rises With Sunset

Ron Marz has earned his rep as one of the most reliable go-to guys in comics, working on a variety of titles for the field's top publishers—but he's never produced a creator-owned book... until now, that is.

This fall, Marz is teaming with Joe Pruett's Desperado Publishing to debut *Russian Sunset*, a creator-owned series that will be offered through Image Comics. Blending crime story and espionage thriller, *Russian Sunset* follows Nik, a soldier for the Russian mob in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn. Born in Russia but raised in America, Nik's newest

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Publisher
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Editors

Cliff Biggers
Ward Batty

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Editorial Office

2770 Carillon Crossing
Marietta, GA 30066
fax (928) 441-5990
cliffbig@comicshopnews.com

Business Office

3577-A Chamblee-Tucker Rd. #215
Atlanta, GA 30341
(770) 939-1364
fax (678) 669-1525
wbatty@csnsider.com

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assignment takes him back to the country of his birth, where he's expected to broker the sale of a stolen nuclear warhead to Chechen terrorists. Slowly, Nik gets drawn into a dangerous web that includes brutal gangsters, seductive spies, fanatical terrorists, weapons of mass destruction and some unexpected revelations.

"This is a story where not everything, or everyone, is what they first appear to be," Marz said. "There are layers to the story, and hopefully a couple of surprises for readers along the way. I'm getting to do some things with this story that I haven't been able to do previously. These characters inhabit a violent, profane world, and we're not pulling any punches in how we depict that."

Marz is joined by artist *Mirko Colak*, a Serbian illustrator making his US debut with this series. "When I first saw Mirko's work, I knew I wanted to work with him, and I knew the story had to be something with a tough sensibility. *Russian Sunset* is very much tailored to his strengths as an artist and storyteller. I think it's going to be a hell of a debut for him," Marz said.

Marz has called on a number of talented illustrators with whom he has previously worked to supply cover images for the series, including *Bart Sears*, *Luke Ross*, *Cully Hamner*, *Brian Stelfreeze* & *Darryl Banks* (with whom he is working for the first time since their run on *Green Lantern*). "It was really a matter of me calling up my friends and arm-twisting them into doing covers," laughs Marz. "Darryl and I have talked about doing something together for a few years now, and this opportunity seemed like a good fit. Hopefully next time we'll get together for some interiors."

Russian Sunset #1 is scheduled for mid-November release.

Marvel Heroes Venture Into the Light

Marvel's superheroes have travelled to all sorts of amazing places—strange worlds, parallel realities, alternate dimensions—but an upcoming trip to the town of Springfield may be one of the most unexpected.

If you're a regular viewer of CBS daytime programming, you might recognize Springfield as the setting of the long-running soap opera *The Guiding Light*. And if you're not—well, you'll be learning about Springfield soon enough!

What does Marvel have to do with *The Guiding Light*? Marvel Assistant Manager of Sales Communication *Jim McCann* recently explained it all to *Comic Shop News*'s *Matt Brady*.

"Basically, on November 1st, *Guiding Light* is doing a special 'Inside The Light' episode titled 'She's a Marvel' that I can't talk too much about just yet, but it is great and it completely opened the door for a logical (believe it or not) crossover.

"But, because it would be difficult for our characters to appear on screen on *Guiding Light* (due to film rights, etc), we thought it would be great if their characters appeared in a comic. So, in the story, something has happened in Springfield to attract S.H.I.E.L.D.'s attention. They think there may be a new super-powered human there. So, the (pre-Civil War) New Avengers descend on the town to see if this person is friend or foe. Unfortunately, they didn't come alone, as some of Marvel's deadliest

villains descend, too, in the hopes of recruiting this person to the dark side, as it were."

McCann, who's helming this crossover tale, explained that "I wanted to write a fun, old-school, classically Marvel story in the eight-pager, to provide an introduction to our comics for *Guiding Light* fans, the majority of whom will be picking up a comic for the first time. I got to read the script on their episode and their head writer, *David Kreizman*, has crafted an excellent episode that harkens back to the kind of characters you'd find in a Marvel story, as well, so I think these two are great companion pieces."

As McCann explained, the story came about as the result of "the search for a wedding dress... As you may remember, Storm's wedding gown was designed by *Shawn Dudley*, costume designer for *Guiding Light*. [Marvel vice president of sales] *David Gabriel* & I are both fans of the soap genre and have contacts in that world. We often talk how similar the two media are.

"So, when it came time to talk to *Guiding Light* and Procter & Gamble Productions (who owns GL), I went into the meeting with Marvel's blessing to pitch a wide number of ideas. P&G's PR Director *Alan Locher* and *Guiding Light* Executive Producer *Ellen Wheeler* were amazingly receptive and just as excited as I was for the possibilities.

"One of the things pitched was to have their characters show up in one of our books. It was just going to be a cameo at first, and then, as talks went on, it grew and grew. I kept expecting either *Guiding Light* or someone at Marvel to say 'No,' but that never happened.

"Finally, after a few months of talking, they came back with not just the approval for us to use their characters in a full story, but that they would feature our books and reference our characters on-screen, in addition to the top secret episode. I was floored! And then completely intimidated! I realized I had a lot of homework to do if I was going to write the eight-page story!"

McCann knows that soap fans are just as demanding regarding continuity and characterization as comic fans are, so he wanted to be sure he didn't disappoint either group. "I've collected Marvel comics for twenty years, so there was no fear in writing them (just incredibly humbled), but the *Guiding Light* side of things... well. So I spent weeks researching the citizens of Springfield so that I wouldn't make any huge continuity or characterization blunders that would have their fans screaming for my head (they are not unlike comic fans). I watched the show and read transcripts to get the characters voices and then set about writing.

"There are some incredibly popular characters from their show popping up in the eight-page story, so I wanted to make sure that their fans who picked it up got as much, if not more, out of the story than the fans who already pick up the books. I made sure to try and get references to their storylines and hallmarks, and put a few little Easter Eggs for their fans to spot as well. I sent it off to Procter & Gamble Productions and *Guiding Light* and heard back almost immediately. They loved it! Now, it's up to the fans. Fortunately, *Alex Chung* of Udon is doing the art, and he is doing an amazing



job! I think *Guiding Light* fans are going to be thrilled when they see their characters in comic book form."

As McCann explained, "the eight page story will be appearing as a back-up in books on sale 10/25, 11/1, and 11/8... And then, like I mentioned earlier, *Guiding Light* is doing their special episode on Wednesday, 11/1, which will feature tons of hidden 'Easter Eggs' for sharp-eyed Marvel fans who tune in. Their Wednesday episodes, called 'Inside the Light' episodes, are an innovative concept started by *Ellen Wheeler* about a year ago. Basically, they are either focused on one character or one storyline, and they are days where literally anything can (and does) happen.

"I don't want to say too much more about their episode, but I do know that, starting this week, Marvel comics & references to Marvel characters have been popping up in Springfield, which is really cool. I actually got to spend some time this week on the set while they filmed this episode, and it is great! Any fan of super heroes should definitely tune in!"

McCann pointed out an added benefit to the crossover. "Procter and Gamble Productions and CBS have been kind enough to promise that they will promote the eight-page story three to four times a week at the end of *Guiding Light*'s episode for three weeks while the books that feature the story are coming out. That is huge! When is the last time you saw a comic book advertised on TV?! I couldn't believe it when they told us! Think of how many people whose daily lives are not touched by comics that will now have a reason to be exposed to the medium.

"And soap fans are just as loyal to their past-time as comic fans; if you put it out there, they will come... Last year, books that were tied into current storylines on soaps were released in the real-world and sat on the *New York Times* best seller list for weeks! So there is huge opportunity for growth and exposure to the medium... Hopefully, the two worlds will see that serialized story-telling is incredibly similar regardless of the way it is presented, and maybe we will see a bit more cross pollination of fans."

McCann is particularly pleased to be the one who gets to tell the tale. "It's a dream come true for me. I was in the ABC Daytime Writer Development Program for years, where I was lucky to write an episode of *One Life to Live* that made it to air. I also spent that time learning serialized story-telling, and how to tell a story that can be rich in history and continuity while still advancing these long-standing characters. The same principles are applied in comics. I moved to New York from Nashville, TN, a

little over two years ago with no job offers and only two goals: write for television (especially soaps), and work for Marvel... Within two months of moving, I was working at Marvel. Now, two years later, I am doing both at the same time, in the strangest (and personally most exciting) hybrid ever—a soap/comic crossover!"

This unique eight-page tale will be added to the following books, boosting their pagecount at no extra cost to readers:

10/25

Civil War: Choosing Sides
Spider-Man Loves Mary Jane #11
Marvel Select Flip Magazine #18
Marvel Tales Flip Magazine #17

11/1

Marvel Adventures Spider-Man #21
Spider-Man & Power Pack #1
Marvel Adventures Flip Magazine #18
Marvel Heroes Flip Magazine #18

11/8

Amazing Spider-Girl #2
Franklin Richards: Happy Franksgiving!
Marvel Adventures Fantastic Four #18

24 X 6 <1

What happens when you start with the hit Fox television series *24* starring *Kiefer Sutherland* as CTU über-agent Jack Bauer and add a six-issue limited series from IDW? You get a prequel tale that predates Jack's actions prior to Season One of the series, that's what!

24: Nightfall, the first limited series from IDW, the publisher of three *24* oneshots, is a prequel to the ongoing hit Fox television series. Before the clock started ticking on season one, Jack Bauer was the head of an elite Special Forces team sent to take down the mass-murder, Victor Drazen—a most challenging task by any means, especially in the war-torn former Yugoslavia. Events quickly spiral out of control, as the hunters become the hunted—and the truth behind the pivotal Operation: Nightfall is revealed.

So who has IDW enlisted to accurately chronicle the comic book adventures of Jack Bauer? None other than regular *24* writers *J.C. Vaughn* & *Mark L. Haynes*, two writers who are quite familiar with Bauer's saga. They're joined by artist *Jean Diaz*, while *Joe Corroney* supplies the six variant cover images that fit together to form one large poster image.

"For fans of *24*, particularly those who have been on the edges of their seats since *Season One*, this is the story that sets everything in motion for Jack Bauer," co-writer *J.C. Vaughn* said. "The events in *Season One* were directly related to events two years to the day earlier. Now our readers will get to see exactly what happened and lead to the coolest show on television."

"IDW Publishing and its talented team takes the *24* fans to a place before the series begins—and the writers continue to deliver on the taut, engaging and almost addictive quality of *24* in this creative iteration. If

Continued on page 6



WHAT IF? X-MEN: AGE OF APOCALYPSE
 RICK REMENDER • DAVE WILKINS
 COVER BY MARKO DJURJEVIC
 DECEMBER



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WHAT IF? X-MEN: DEADLY GENESIS
 DAVID HINE • DAVID YARDIN
 DECEMBER



MARVEL

WHAT IF...

THINGS DON'T ALWAYS HAPPEN AS THEY SHOULD

WHAT IF? AVENGERS DISASSEMBLED

JEFF PARKER • AARON LOPRESTI

NOVEMBER



WHAT IF? WOLVERINE: ENEMY OF THE STATE

JIMMIE ROBINSON • CARMINE DI GIAMDOMENICO

COVER BY DOUG ALEXANDER

NOVEMBER

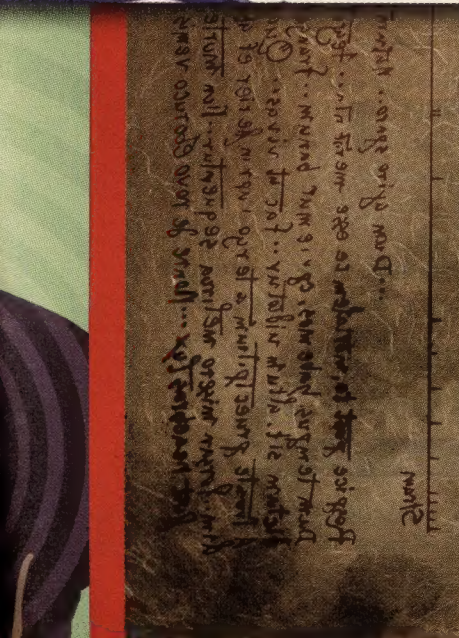
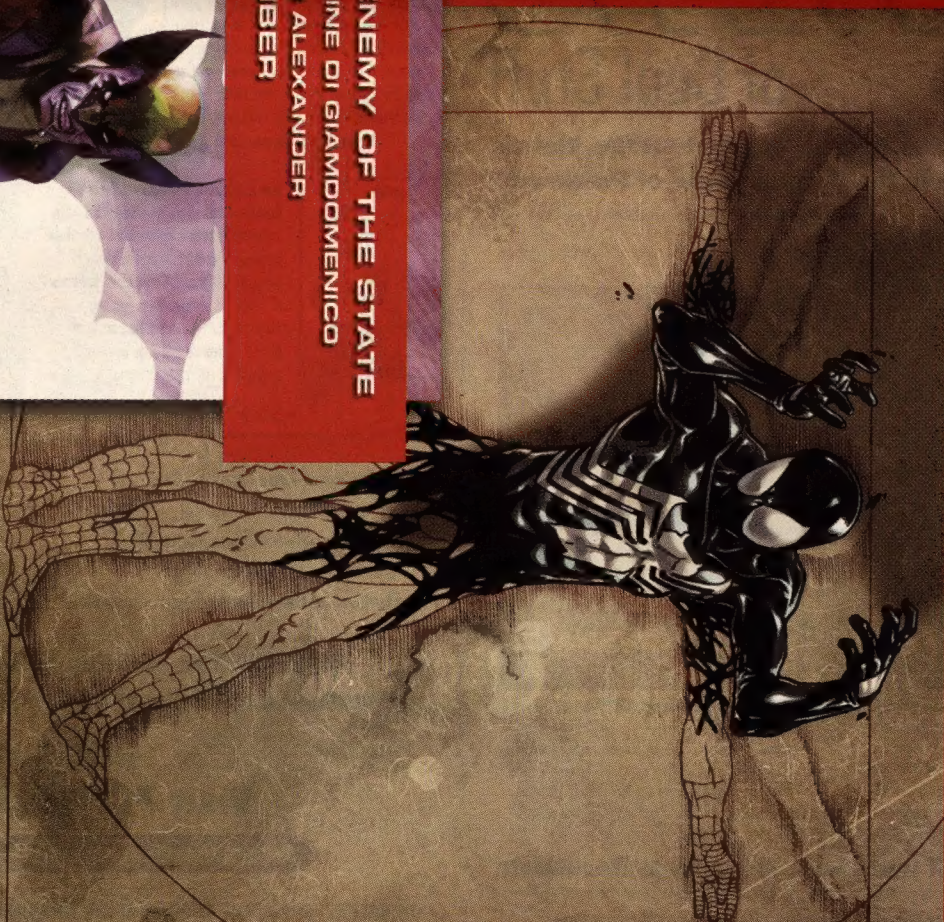


WHAT IF? SPIDER-MAN: THE OTHER

PETER DAVID • KHOI PHAM

COVER BY MARK BROOKS

NOVEMBER



you're a fan of the television series 24, then this prequel will satisfy beyond expectations," added Michael Peikoff, Vice-President 20th Century Fox Licensing & Merchandising.

24: *Nightfall #1* is slated for November release.

Coming Comics— Dark Horse in December

Bryan Talbot, creator of *The Tale of One Bad Rat* and *The Adventures of Luther Arkwright*, unveils his massive new graphic novel *Alice in Sunderland* this winter. This 328-page tome follows *Alice in Wonderland* creator Lewis Carroll as he ventures into the incredible realm of Sunderland, a place of fantasy and wonderment that ultimately provides him with the inspiration for his famous book. Enter the famous Edwardian palace of varieties, The Sunderland Empire, for a unique experience: an entertaining and epic meditation on myth, history and storytelling then decide for yourself—does Sunderland really exist?

Comics have seen their share of offbeat crossovers (*Punisher/Archie*, anyone?), but there are few as unexpected as *The Bakers Meet Jingle Belle*, a collaboration by Paul Dini & Kyle Baker that brings together the daughter of Santa and the family of Kyle. As the Baker parents try to frantically finish their holiday preparations, they find them-



selves in dire need of a baby-sitter. Enter Jingle Belle, fresh from a Christmas Eve defection from her father, Santa, and looking for a place to hide out. Guess what happens next?...

Dark Horse continues their syroco-styled line of *Peanuts* statues with *Classic Peanuts Characters #3: Linus*. This statue, produced in a limited edition of 1200 hand-numbered copies, comes carefully packaged in a custom-tooled, full-color, litho-printed tin box.

Also included is a small booklet about each character and a vintage-style pinback button of the character.

While Cary Nord takes a well-deserved issue off, Paul Lee joins writer Timothy Truman as artist of *Conan #35*. King Conan foils a plot to assassinate him and usurp his throne, but the subsequent intrigue draws the barbarian king into a web of dark magics and darker deeds in this direct sequel to Robert E. Howard's "The Phoenix and the Sword."

One of Conan's most unforgettable adversaries makes the transition from print to sculpture when Dark Horse releases the *Janissa the Widow-Maker Bust*, sculpted by Tony Cipriano based on the art of Cary Nord.

Steve Niles is joined by artist Kyle Hotz to present the latest adventure of Cal McDonald in *Criminal Macabre: Two Red Eyes*. This four-part series that pits McDonald against Nosferatu will pave the way for the launch of an ongoing line of *Criminal Macabre* comics.

Dark Horse has plenty more *Hellboy* Animated merchandise on the way, including *The Hellboy Animated PVC Set* featuring Hellboy, Liz, and Abe; the *Hellboy Animated Sculpted Magnet: Hellboy*, and the *Hellboy Animated Sculpted Magnet: Right Hand of Doom*.

Dark Horse new recruits winner Jacob Chabot is the writer/artist of *The Mighty Skullboy Army Volume One*, an 88 page graphic novel featuring brazen robots, ill-

fated interns, unpredictable helper monkeys, insane turnips, and more.

If there's one call that no one wants to miss, it's that call from his/her future self... unless the only call's only sounds are his/her dying screams, that is. That's just the sort of call that college students are receiving in *One Missed Call 1 + 2* by Yasushi Akimoto & Mayumi Shihou... and a few days afterwards, at the date and time of



PREVIEWS

One Catalog, TONS of Cool Stuff.

From comic books to action figures, games to DVDs, there's something for everyone in the October issue of Previews!

ON THE COVER ...



JUSTICE SOCIETY OF AMERICA #1—The return of the world's first super team! Geoff Johns, artists Dale Eaglesham & Art Thibert, and cover artist Alex Ross band together to usher in the DCU's next age of heroes and villains in the *Justice Society of America* #1! Meet new legacies, solve a mystery stretching into the far future, witness the return of the world's greatest hero, and watch another one fall—all in the pages of this fantastic new series!

500+ pages of cool stuff that starts shipping in December!



SPAWN/BATMAN: INNER DEMONS—DC's Dark Knight and Todd McFarlane's *Spawn* star in an all-new crossover special, pitting each dark hero against the other's main nemesis! Spawn versus The Joker! Batman versus The Clown! With the stakes being the souls and sanity of our heroes!

CHECK OUT THESE OFFERINGS:

Outer Orbit #1—In space, no one can hear you scream... or belch, or swear, or cry like a little girl! Things get VERY spacey when Zach Howard, Sean Murphy, and screenwriter Hans Rodionoff present the outrageous, rude, and hilarious space fantasy from Dark Horse Comics that takes the time-honored sci-fi traditions and sucker-punches them!

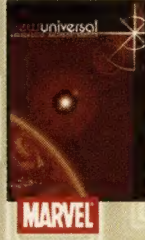


The Spirit #1—Acclaimed writer/artist Darwyn Cooke sets his sights on Will Eisner's classic hero *The Spirit* in this all-new monthly DC Comics series that maintains the "spirit" of Eisner's creation while bringing a new sensibility to the character. Don't miss the first exciting issue, filled with action, adventure, humor and sexy girls galore!



The Complete Invincible Library Volume 1 HC—This massive, 768-page tome collects the entire contents of the previously released (and sold-out) *Invincible Ultimate Collections Volumes 1 & 2*! This is a must-have for any *Invincible* fan and a perfect addition to any reinforced, sturdy bookshelf, and will be not offered again!

NewUniversal #1—Once, in another universe, heroes lived and died outside of regular Marvel continuity. This was the *New Universe*: home to the *Star Brand*, *D.P. 7*, *PSI-Force*, and other unique heroes. 20 years later, writer Warren Ellis takes a bold new look at this setting in *NewUniversal* #1, featuring art (and a new art style) by the incomparable Salvador Larroca!



AND BE SURE NOT TO MISS:

- **EC Archives: Tales from the Crypt Vol. 1 HC** from Gemstone Publishing!
- **Red Sonja: Adam Hughes Statue** from D.E./Dynamite Entertainment!
- **The Book of Caddyshack** in the Books Section!
- **Star Wars: Episode V—Zuckuss Mini-Bust** in the Statues Section!
- **Doctor Who Toys & Collectibles** in the Imports Section!
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the message's posting, they die in mysterious accidents. The film is coming to America in early 2007... and so is the manga based on the movie by director Takashi Miike.

Zach Howard, Sean Murphy, & Hans Rodinoff hope readers will join them in *Outer Orbit*, an irreverently twisted space fantasy that jumbles all the traditional elements of the genre.

- Dark Horse collected editions include:
- **Chronicles of Conan Volume 11: The dance of the Skull & Other Stories**, collecting Marvel's *Conan the Barbarian* #s 82-90, featuring work by Roy Thomas, John Buscema, & Howard Chaykin;
 - **Domination: Conflict 1—No More Noise**, presenting the SF-adventure-comedy by Masamune Shirow;
 - **Emily the Strange Volume One: Cosmic Debris**, collecting the first three issues of the series;
 - **Grendel: Devil by the Deed**, collecting the rarely-seen early Grendel tales by Matt Wagner originally published as backup tales in the pages of *Mage*;
 - **Gunsmith Cats Omnibus Volume One**, featuring almost five hundred pages of Sonoda Kenichi's sexy sf adventure tales;
 - **Little Lulu Volume Fourteen: Queen Lulu**, collecting ten more issues of charming all-ages material by John Stanley & Irving Tripp;
 - **Nexus Archives Volume Five**, collecting more classic tales by Mike Baron & Steve Rude;
 - **Star Wars: Rebellion Volume One—My**

Brother, My Enemy, collecting the story of Rebel spies, Imperial ambushes, and the dreaded Darth Vader; and

• **The World Below**, collecting the limited series by Paul Chadwick & Ron Randall.

Ins & Outs

In: A new *Arthur Suydam* dust jacket painting for the second hardcover edition of *Marvel Zombies* that CSN told you about last week. This cover will be based on *Todd McFarlane's* Spidey-vs-Venom image featured on the cover of *Amazing Spider-Man* #315.

Out: Brian K. Vaughan & Niko Henrichon's *Pride of Baghdad*, which has been such a runaway hit that Vertigo was caught short when massive reorders ate up the first wave of copies. The book is *not* out of print, though, and more copies are slated to reach comic shops any day now. Should the first printing sell out—and that looks increasingly likely—Vertigo will do a reprinting of the hardcover. So if you haven't had the chance to find out what everyone is raving about, don't worry—it's not too late!

In: A new *Shanna the She-Devil* miniseries, this time brought to you by Justin Gray & Jimmy Palmiotti (written prior to their exclusive with DC that CSN told you about a couple of weeks ago) with art by Khari Evans.

Out: Rick Remender's *Fear Agent*, which is out at Image—but it's in at Dark Horse, where the book will make its new home, joining recent Image-to-Dark Horse *Rex Mundi* as an addition to Dark Horse's line.

Remender will continue to produce other projects for Image.

In: Olivier Coipel, who will join J. Michael Straczynski on the new *Thor* series launching next year. So will this be the *real* Thor or the clone? Well, just remember... *someone* was worthy enough to pick up that hammer...

In: A *Frank Miller Daredevil Omnibus* collecting the acclaimed creator's historic run on the series in a single massive volume. Marvel E-i-C *Joe Quesada* also reported that another *Daredevil Omnibus* is in the works collecting *Daredevil: Love & War*, *Daredevil: Born Again*, and *Daredevil: Man Without Fear*.

It's a Green World After All

Marvel editor-in-chief *Joe Quesada* has said a little more about next year's big event, *World War Hulk* by Greg Pak & John Romita Jr. In a conversation with *Comic Shop Newsarama's* Matt Brady, Quesada revealed that "*World War Hulk* will consist of the *World War Hulk* mini proper, several issues of the monthly *Hulk* series and perhaps a tie-in book here and there. It will be considerably smaller than *Civil War* in title count but not in story.

"Also, *World War Hulk* will be a considerably different story than *Civil War* in one very big respect. *Civil War* is steep deep in the real world and real world metaphors, *World War Hulk* will be just wall-to-wall fun and fantasy and lots and lots of punching

and breaking of stuff. We love the idea and its timing because it will be the perfect story to cleanse the palette after the weight of *Civil War*. A big green sorbet of sorts..."

Look for more dish on this "big green sorbet" in upcoming issues of CSN!

Terra-fying News for Supergirl Fans

Change of plans! The *Joe Kelly* story originally slated for *Supergirl* #12 has been rescheduled—and in its place, the comic will feature a story by *Jimmy Palmiotti, Justin Gray, & Amanda Conner* introducing the all-new Terra.

"Justin and I are really excited about showing what we can do with Supergirl, and equally excited about introducing the new Terra into the DCU," Palmiotti said. "With Amanda on board for the art, we couldn't ask for a more fun book to premiere her in." "Supergirl rocks! Amanda Rocks! Terra... throws rocks! It is a perfect combination," Gray added.

The story finds the Girl of Steel down in the dumps and no match for a monster that's using her emotions as a weapon. Instead, this looks like a job for a Terra, a mysterious new hero whose very steps make the ground tremble to make her presence known to the world. (And is it any surprise that this issue will pave the way for a 2007 *Terra* miniseries?)

Supergirl #12 is slated for early November release.

Only the Best...Only in PREVIEWS

You want the best? We've got it! This month's *Previews* is chock-full of incredible toys, models, and more, with a selection of genres from the hottest comics to the coolest movies and beyond! Quality, diversity, variety... only in *Previews*! Check out the October *Previews*, on sale September 27th, for everything you see here!

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- ◆ Angel Magazine #18 PX Cover Ed.
- ◆ Red Sonja: Adam Hughes Statue
- ◆ Sin City Legends: That Yellow Bastard PX Bust
- ◆ Smallville Magazine #18 PX Ed.
- ◆ Spider Chronicles HC-PX Signed & Limited Ed.
- ◆ Stargate: SG-1 "Avalon" Vals PX Action Figure (DST)
- ◆ Stargate Magazine #14 PX Ed.

DIAMOND SELECT TOYS

- ◆ Battlestar Galactica (Classic) Cylon Minimates
- ◆ Battlestar Galactica (Modern) Cylon Minimates
- ◆ Buffy the Vampire Slayer: "Mr. Gordo" Stuffed Pig Plush Replica
- ◆ G.I. Joe Icons: Duke Bust
- ◆ Ghost Rider In Desert Movie Statue
- ◆ Ghost Rider On Building Movie Statue
- ◆ Ghost Rider On Water Movie Statue
- ◆ Ghost Rider: Mephistopheles' Cane Movie Replica
- ◆ Marvel Icons: Thor Bust
- ◆ Marvel Milestones: Elektra Statue
- ◆ Marvel Mount: Heroes & Villains Bookends
- ◆ Marvel Origins: Spider-Man Statue
- ◆ Marvel Universe: New Avengers Spider-Man Bust
- ◆ Mini-Figure Resin Display Stand
- ◆ New Avengers Statue Set
- ◆ New Avengers: Spider-Woman Statue
- ◆ Rocky 30th Anniversary Apollo Creed Shorts Replica
- ◆ Serenity: "River Triumphant" Statue
- ◆ Spider-Man: Sinister Six Series-Vulture Medium Statue
- ◆ Stargate: SG-1 Series 3 Action Figures
- ◆ Ultimate Captain America Mask Replica

DC DIRECT

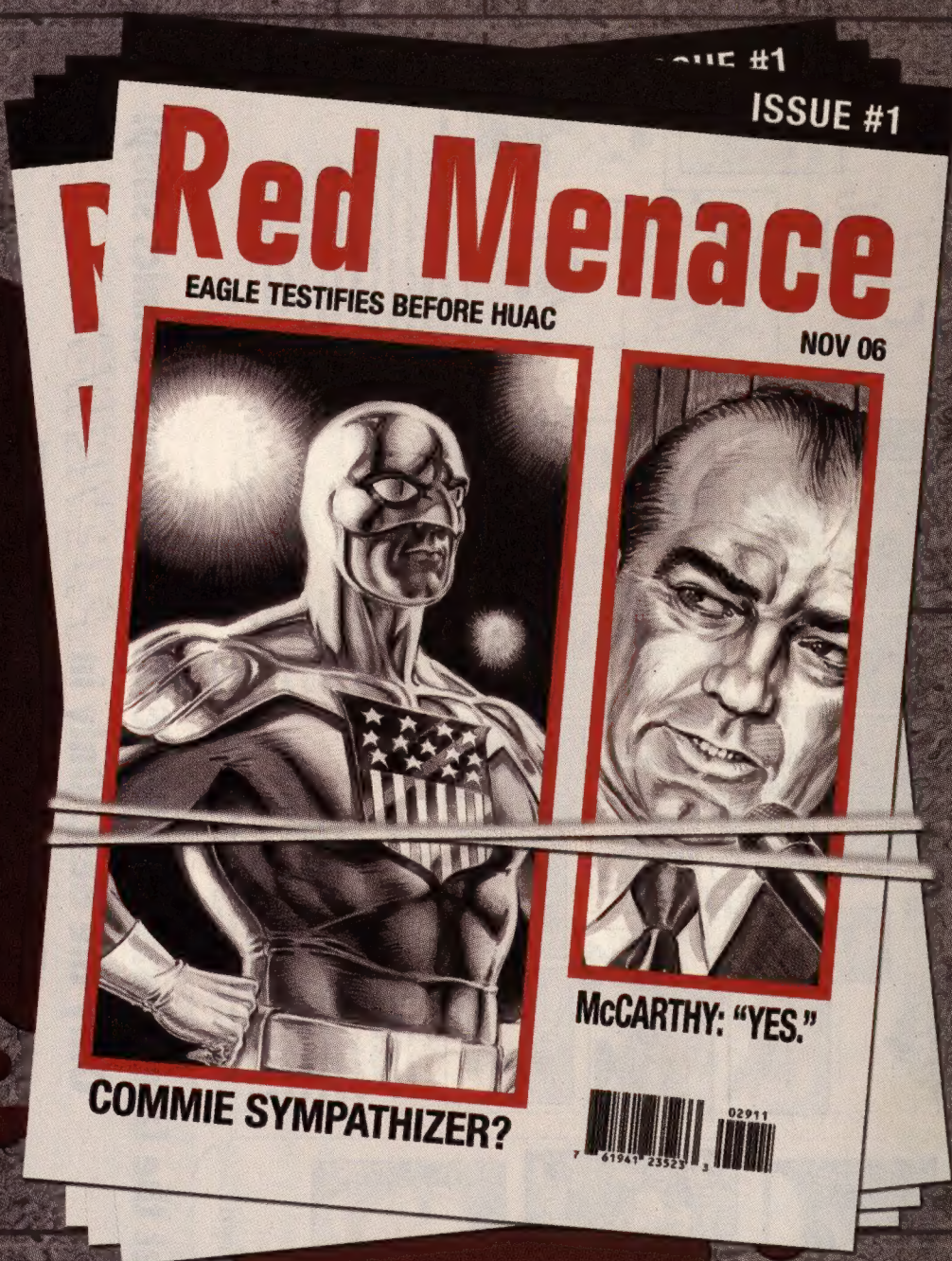
- ◆ Batman/Scarecrow: Fear Gift Set
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- ◆ INFINITE CRISIS SERIES 2
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